

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 SP-02 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 PM-01 DODE-00 EB-03 PRS-01 IO-03 L-01 SAM-01

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R 300710Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3194

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY DHAHRAHAN

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MARR, TC

SUBJECT: U.S. POLICY TOWARD "GULF SECURITY"

1. SUMMARY. IN TWO RESPECTS WHICH WE COMMENT ON IN THIS MESSAGE  
WE SEE OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO GET ON MORE POSITIVE FOOTING WITH GULF  
STATES, WHICH ARE BOTH RAPIDLY GROWING IN POLITICAL SELF-CONFIDENCE AND

BEGINNING TO CONSULT AMONG THEMSELVES ON REGIONAL PROBLEMS. END  
SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH NO UAE OFFICIAL HAS RAISED SUBJECT OF U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE

IN GULF OR INDIAN OCEAN DIRECTLY WITH US (WHICH IS IN CHARACTER WITH  
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THIS GOVERNMENT'S CAUTIOUS APPROACH TO ISSUES AFFECTING--OR APPEARING

TO AFFECT--STRATEGIC BALANCE BETWEEN SUPERPOWERS), WE BELIEVE THERE HAS BEEN SUBTLE BUT PALPABLE SHIFT IN UAEG'S ATTITUDE ON THIS SUBJECT OVER PAST YEAR. WHEN THESE SMALL GULF STATES WERE ABRUPTLY CAST LOOSE

FROM BRITISH CONTROL AND PROTECTION THREE AND HALF YEARS AGO THERE WERE SO MANY UNCERTAINTIES AS TO HOW POLITICAL FUTURE OF AREA WOULD EVOLVE THAT MOST OF NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES PROBABLY SAW US NAVAL PRESENCE IN AREA AS VAGUELY COMFORTING. IN PAST YEAR, HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN INCREASE IN SELF-CONFIDENCE AMONG STATES OF THIS AREA THAT WE

THINK HAS CHANGED ATTITUDE TOWARD OUTSIDE MILITARY PRESENCE. THERE IS GREATER FEELING THAT "THIS IS OUR GULF, AND WE CAN TAKE CARE OF IT OURSELVES." RED BANNER HEADLINE IN GOVERNMENT-OWNED DAILY AL-ITTIHAD RECENTLY PROCLAIMED "BAHRAIN STATES THERE ARE NO BASES ON ITS TERRITORY."

ONE MIGHT ARGUE THAT THIS KIND OF HEADLINE IS DESIGNED TO HELP GOB OFF THE HOOK, BUT WE THINK THIS WOULD BE WRONG INTERPRETATION IN THIS CASE. RATHER, WE BELIEVE IT INDICATES THAT IN ITS OWN QUIET WAY THE UAEG IS ADDING ITS VOICE TO THOS IN GULF COUNCILS WHO ARE URGING REMOVAL OF ALL "FOREIGN" (INCLUDING SOVIET) MILITARY FORCES FROM GULF.

WE SUSPECT THIS ATTITUDE HAS GROWN AMONG OTHER GULF RIPARIANS GENERALLY

IN PAST YEAR, AND THAT IT IS REALIZATION OF THIS THAT HAS LED BAHRAIN GOVERNMENT TO SEEK TO PUT TERMINAL DATE ON COMIDEASTFOR PRESENCE ON ISLAND.

3. CASTING A BACKWARD GLANCE AT HISTORY OF THIS AREA SINCE BRITISH LEFT, WE ARE IMPRESSED BY THE OVERALL SUCCESS STORY IT REPRESENTS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE IF ACHIEVEMENT IS PLACED IN JUXTAPOSITION TO

ANXIETIES EVERYBODY FELT IN 1969 ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IN WAKE OF BRITISH WITHDRAWAL. OF COURSE MONEY ALWAYS HELPS, AND THESE ARE UNIQUELY RICH COUNTRIES, BUT EVEN WITH MONEY THERE COULD HAVE BEEN SOME SERIOUS UNTOWARD DEVELOPMENTS. INSTEAD THE LEDGER IS POSITIVE ON SEV-

ERAL ACCOUNTS THAT ARE HIGHLY IMPORTANT TO U.S. INTERESTS. GOVERNMENTAL UPHEAVALS HAVE BEEN VERY FEW GIVEN NUMBER OF STATES INVOLVED, AND WHERE THEY HAVE OCCURRED (QATAR, YEMEN) THEY HAVE TURNED OUT TO BE FORTHE BETTER. ELSEWHERE THERE HAS BEEN FOR MOST PART NOT ONLY  
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POLITICAL STABILITY BUT STEADY GROWTH IN GOVERNMENTAL EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCE. EQUALLY IMPRESSIVE HAS BEEN ENERGY WHICH STATES IN THIS AREA HAVE RECENTLY BROUGHT TO BEAR TO RESOLVE DISPUTES AMONG THEMSELVES. MOST SIGNIFICANT OF THESE IS IRAN-IRAQ SETTLEMENT WHICH-- IF IT LASTS, AND IF IRAQI POLICIES CONTINUE TO EVOLVE POSITIVELY-- COULD HAVE PROFOUND EFFECT ON GULF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN ABU DHABI-SAUDI BORDER SETTLEMENT, IRAQI-SAUDI BORDER SETTLEMENT, AND PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE--BOTH MILITARY AND ECONOMIC--THAT

OMAN'S NEIGHBORS HAVE GIVEN IT TO HELP SUPPRESS DHOFAR INSURGENCY. ON THE ARAB-ISRAEL ISSUE THE GULF STATES HAVE GIVEN BULK OF THEIR IMPORTANT FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO STATES COMMITTED TO NEGOTIATIONS RATHER THAN TO RADICALS. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, EARLY FEARS THAT IRANIAN AND ARAB INTERESTS WOULD CLASH ACROSS THE GULF HAVE SO FAR PROVEN UNFOUNDED.

4. THIS IS NATURALLY NOT TO SAY THAT EVERYTHING IS PERFECT IN THIS AREA. WE HAVE SERIOUS POLICY DIFFERENCES OVER OIL WITH GULF OPEC MEMBERS. THERE IS STILL MORE THAN ENOUGH CORRUPTION AND GOVERNMENTAL INCOMPETENCE TO GO AROUND, AND PROBLEMS THAT TRADITIONAL REGIMES WILL HAVE IN COPING WITH RAPID DEVELOPMENT MAY YET PRODUCE GOOD DEAL OF POLITICAL VOLATILITY. BUT SO FAR, AND TAKEN AS A WHOLE, THE RECORD IS AN IMPRESSIVE ONE OF POLITICAL MATURITY AND PRAGMATISM. FOR ONE THING STATES IN THIS AREA HAVE SPENT MORE TIME ATTENDING TO THEIR OWN PROBLEMS THAN THEY HAVE LECTURING OTHERS ABOUT THEIRS, A PHENOMENON THAT IS AS RARE AS IT IS WHOLESOME THESE DAYS.

5. TWO OBSERVATIONS OCCUR TO US ABOUT THIS TREND, AND IMPLICATIONS IT HAS FOR THE US. FIRST IS THAT AS A MATTER OF PUBLIC POSTURE THAT WOULD SERVE OUR OBJECTIVES, IT SEEMS TO US THAT US COULD DO MORE TO TAKE NOTE OF, AND INDICATE SUPPORT FOR, PROGRESS IN POLITICAL STABILITY TO DATE AND RECENT INCIPENT MOVES TOWARD REGIONAL COOPERATION. WE LIKED WHAT MR. SISCO HAD TO SAY ON HILL THE OTHER DAY BUT UNFORTUNATELY IMPACT OF HIS REMARKS WAS LESSENED BY FACT THAT THEY WERE MADE IN CONTEXT OF DEFENSE FOR U.S. ARMS SALES POLICY IN AREA. PERHAPS GULF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT AS SUCCESS STORY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT MIGHT BE MADE PROMINENT THEME IN ONE OF SECRETARY'S SPEECHES. ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE COULD BE PRAISED AND POINT MADE THAT

WITH RESOURCES THESE STATES POSSESS POSSIBILITIES FOR COLLABORATION AMONG THEM IN REGIONAL FRAMEWORK ARE SUBSTANTIAL. USG HAS SAID  
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MANY TIMES IN PAST THAT THIS IS REGION WHERE IT LOOKS PRIMARILY TO AREA STATES THEMSELVES TO ASSURE THEIR OWN SECURITY; POINT CAN NOW BE MADE THAT IN PAST 3 YEARS ACTIONS AREA STATES HAVE TAKEN HAVE HAD JUST THIS EFFECT. USG MIGHT ALSO EXPRESS WILLINGNESS TO CO-OPERATE IN BUILDING REGIONAL FRAMEWORK BY PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS THAT MIGHT BEST BE UNDERTAKEN ON REGIONAL BASIS. MAIN POINT WOULD NOT BE EXPECTATION THAT WE WOULD SOON BECOME INVOLVED IN ANY SUCH PROJECTS (THEY WILL BE A LONG TIME GETTING OFF THE GROUND) BUT TO ADOPT POSITIVE PUBLIC POSTURE TOWARD WHAT WE SEE AS LONG-TERM TREND HERE, AND TO MAKE INDIVIDUAL GOVERNMENTS FEEL THAT US INTERESTS ARE IN HARMONY WITH LINE OF DEVELOPMENT THAT GULF STATES INCREASINGLY SEE IN THEIR OWN SELF-INTEREST.

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6. SECOND, RELATED OBSERVATION CONCERNS HOW WE RESPOND TO BAHRAIN GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST THAT WE PUT TERMINAL DATE ON COMIDEASTFOR PRESENCE IN BAHRAIN. WE HAVE NOT SEEN DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS IN RESPONSE TO JOE TWINAM'S TELEGRAM REPORTING GOB REQUEST, BUT WE GATHER FROM ARP'S POUCHED SUMMARY THAT WASHINGTON'S CHOSEN TACTIC IS TO PLAY FOR TIME, PRESUMABLY IN HOPE THAT DEVELOPMENTS COULD OCCUR-- PARTICULARLY FURTHER STATE OF AGREEMENT IN ARAB-ISRAEL NEGOTIATIONS-- THAT WOULD TAKE PRESSURE OFF GOB AND CAUSE IT TO FORGET ABOUT DEMANDS.

IT CERTAINLY SEEMS TRUE THAT RENEWAL OF ARAB-ISRAEL WARFARE WOULD SEAL DEMAND FOR REMOVAL OF COMIDEASTFOR. BUT WE QUESTION WHETHER CONVERSE CAN BE CONFIDENTLY ASSERTED--THAT IF AGREEMENT FOR SECOND STAGE OF WITHDRAWAL IN SINAI IS REACHED, PRESSURE WILL BE OFF BAHRAINIS TO DIVEST THEMSELVES OF COMIDEASTFOR PRESENCE. WHILE

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WE DOUBT THAT GULF RIPARIANS WILL THEMSELVES MOVE TO ESTABLISH FORMAL SECURITY PACT OR JOINT FORCES ANYTIME IN NEAR FUTURE (THERE IS LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR THIS IDEA ON THIS SIDE OF GULF), IDEA OF PERIODIC CONSULTATIONS ON SECURITY AMONG GULF STATES SEEMS BROADLY FAVORED. IF MOOD OF SELF-RELIANCE AMONG GULF STATES GROWS, WE THINK THESE CONSULTATIVE GET-TOGETHERS WILL TREAT OUR HOMEPORING ARRANGEMENT IN BAHRAIN INCREASINGLY AS DISTASTEFUL ANACHRONISM REGARD-

LESS OF WHAT HAPPENS IN ARAB-ISRAEL THEATRE.

7. FIGHTING TO PRESERVE COMIDEASTFOR BY ONE TACTIC OR ANOTHER IS NOT LIKELY TO PRODUCE MAJOR RUPTURE BETWEEN USG AND GULF STATES, BUT QUESTION IS WHETHER WE PERCEIVE COMIDEASTFOR AS PROVIDING SUFFICIENT UTILITY IN NINETEEN SEVENTIES AND EIGHTIES TO OFFSET GROWING POLITICAL LIABILITY THAT WE BELIEVE IT WILL ENTAIL IN OUR RELATIONS WITH MOST OF GOVERNMENTS IN THIS AREA. UNLIKE FACILITY AT DIEGO GARCIA, COMIDEASTFOR PRESENCE IN BAHRAIN HAS NO EFFECT ON OUR GLOBAL FORCE POSTURE. ITS SHOW-THE-FLAG FUNCTION COULD BE ADEQUATELY (IF SOMEWHAT LESS CONVENIENTLY) PERFORMED BY SHIPS ON INDIAN OCEAN STATION. THE FREQUENCY OF SUCH VISITS MIGHT BE LOWER BUT WOULD STILL BE ADEQUATE. MAIN LOSS AS FAR AS WE CAN SEE WOULD BE LESSER PROXIMITY OF US NAVAL VESSELS TO SIZABLE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES IN GULF WHICH MIGHT HAVE TO BE EVACUATED IN TIME OF EMERGENCY. BUT AGAIN WE WONDER IF THIS FACTOR CANNOT BE LARGELY COMPENSATED FOR BY INCREASE IN US NAVAL SHIP DAYS THAT WE ARE PROJECTING FOR OUR UNITS IN INDIAN OCEAN.

8. WE BELIEVE ALSO THAT US AGREEMENT TO PHASE OUT COMIDEASTFOR WOULD HAVE EFFECT OF BRINGING ADDED PRESSURE AGAINST SOVIET USE OF FACILITIES IN IRAQ AND ADEN. WE KNOW, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT PDRY REPS VISITING HERE HAVE COUNTERED QUERIES ABOUT SOVIET PRESENCE IN ADEN BY POINTING TO "US BASE" IN BAHRAIN. US FACILITY IN DIEGO GARCIA IS NOT IN SAME CATEGORY BECAUSE IT IS FAR OFF, AND IT IS NOT "BASE" ON "ARAB SOIL". WE DO NOT BELIEVE ARABS OF THIS AREA, AT ANY RATE, REGARD US PRESENCE AT DIEGO GARCIA WITH NEARLY SAME SENTITIVITY AS THEY ARE BEGINNING TO FEEL ABOUT OUR TOKEN PRESENCE IN BAHRAIN. LARGE PART OF PROBLEM IS PSYCHOLOGICAL. GULF ARABS REMEMBER TIME WHEN BRITISH FORCES WERE STATIONED AT BAHRAIN AND TEND TO SEE US PRESENCE THERE AS LINGERING REMINDER OF COLONIAL PAST.

9. IN MY VIEW COMIDEASTFOR PRESENCE EXERTED STABILIZING INFLUENCE  
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DURING UNCERTAIN TRANSITION PERIOD BETWEEN PRECIPITATE BRITISH DEPARTURE AND TIME WHEN GULF STATES COULD DEMONSTRATE THEY COULD STAND POLITICALLY ON THEIR OWN FEET. TRANSITION PERIOD IS HOWEVER NOW

RAPIDLY PHASING INTO NEW PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE IN WHICH AREA STATES  
FEEL GREATER CONFIDENCE THAT THEY CAN MANAGE THEIR OWN AFFAIRS,  
INCLUDING SECURITY. CENTRAL QUESTION FOR USG NOW IS WHETHER IT IS  
WORTH TRYING TO MAINTAIN A PRESENCE THAT RUNS COUNTER (OR IS VIEWED  
SUBJECTIVELY BY AREA STATES AS RUNNING COUNTER) TO THESE NEW  
POLITICAL TRENDS. WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE IT IS NOT, AND  
THAT WISEST COURSE WOULD BE FOR USG TO ACCEDE GRACEFULLY AND  
MATTER-OF-FACTLY TO GOB REQUEST TO HAVE COMIDEASTFOR LEAVE BAHRAIN  
IN 1977.  
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